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Seoul Gaels:

The Culture of Irish Expatriates in South Korea and Cross-cultural Communication through Gaelic Sports



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OUTLINE



- 1. Research Backgrounds**
- 2. Research Methods**
- 3. Gaelic Sport and In-Group Cohesion**
- 4. Gaelic Sport and Cross-cultural communication**
- 5. Conclusion**

1. Research Backgrounds:

Irish Diaspora and Gaelic Sport

Conventional Destinations: UK and US (West to West)

Push Factor: Famine and Hardship (Harris, 1999)

Pull Factor: Better life Chances (MacRaild, 2010)

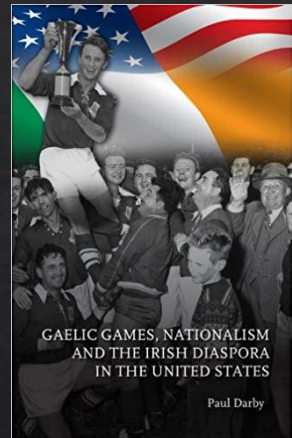
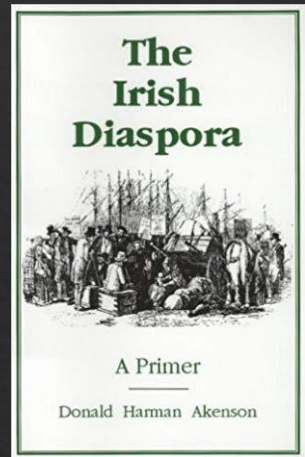
Gaelic Sport: Irish Nationalism (Billings, 2017; Darby, 2010)

Contemporary Destinations: East Asia (West to East)

Push Factor: Economic Recession (Fanning, 2016)

Pull Factor: New cultural experience,
Short and mid-term economic opportunity
(Government of Ireland, 2019)

Gaelic Sport: Irish Nationalism + Cosmopolitanism



1. Research Backgrounds:

Migrants and Social Capital

Multiculturalism and Cultural Diversity

- Assimilation or Segregation (Collier, 2014; Goodhart, 2013)
- Contact or Conflict (Putnam, 2009)
- Conservative? Liberal? or Radical?



Social Capital and Migration (Kim, 2013; Lancee, 2012; Putnam, 2007)

- Bonding Capital: Intra community networks (thick trust)
- Bridging Capital: Inter community networks (thin trust)



2. Research Backgrounds:

Development of Gaelic Sports in Asia

- 23 Gaelic Sport Clubs in East and Southeast Asia
- 5 Major Inter-Asian Championships: Asian Gaelic Games
North Asian Gaelic Games
South Asian Gaelic Games
All China Gaelic Games
Indochina Gaelic Games
- GAA's Global Games Development Fund



2. Research Methods

A Seoul Gaels Case Study

- Research Questions

Do Gaelic Sports function as a tool for enhancing social bonds amongst Irish expats?

Do Gaelic Sports provide space wherein the interaction between Irish and Korean people takes place?

- Ethnographic Research (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007)

Two weeks of research fieldwork in Seoul, April 2018

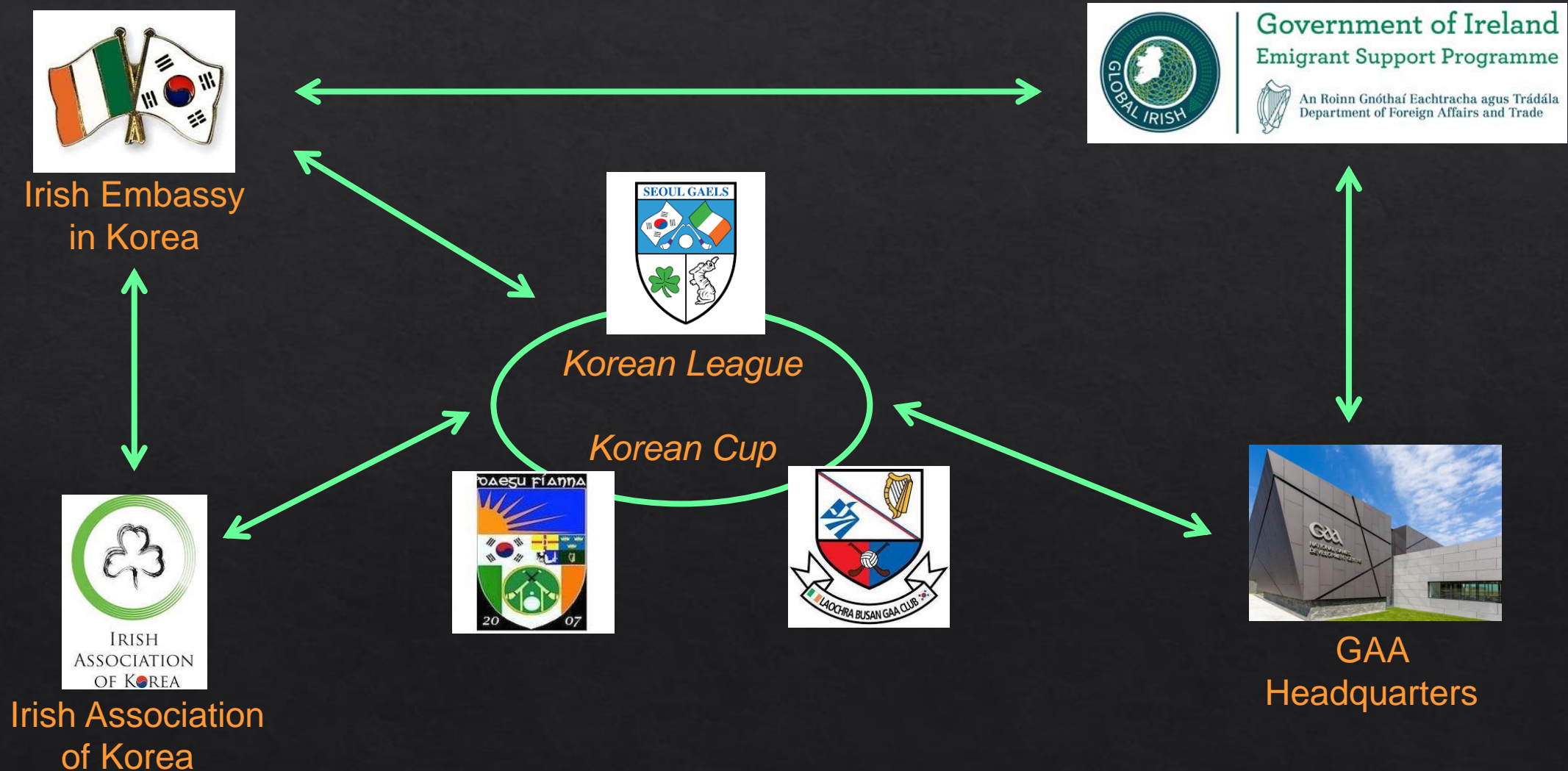
Semi-structured interviews

Observations



3. Gaelic Sports and In-Group Cohesion

The in-group network of Irish expatriates in South Korea



3. Gaelic Sports and In-Group Cohesion

- Sporting and leisure pursuit
- A sense of national identity: Irish Accent (Imagined community or transnationalism)
- A source of information (job and house hunting)
- Support for newcomers
- Sustained communication with returnees
- Social engagement (i.e. Darkness into light)

Trust, Reciprocity and Networks (Som, 2014)



4. Gaelic Sports and Cross-Cultural Communication

March

Promotion and Recruitment



April to October

Weekly Training
Korean Cup and Korean League
North Asian Gaelic Games
Asian Gaelic Games



Multinational Gaelic FC

November to December

AGM and Christmas Ball



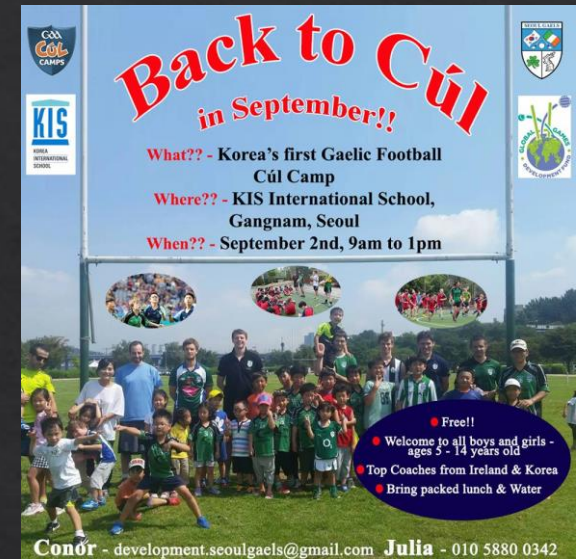
cross-cultural interaction

a sense of cross-cultural community

4. Gaelic Sports and Cross-Cultural Communication

Youth Development Programme

- Global Diffusion of Gaelic Sports (Pan-Asian Connection)
- Irish and Korean cultural connection
- Learning English through the sport
- Learning Korean culture by running this event
- Promoting multiculturalism (diversity and harmony)



5. Conclusion



Utility value of Seoul Gaels as a form of social capital

Bonding Capital: the cohesion amongst Irish Expatriates

Bridging Capital: the interaction between Korean and Irish

Presenting distinctive Irish identity abroad

Promoting multicultural diversity in the host country

Grassroot Gaelic Athletic Movement and Global Sporting Culture